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Soft tissue sarcomas of the foot: long-term treatment results of conservative surgery and pre-or-postoperative radiotherapy

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Introduction: The therapeutic approach and outcomes are not well established due to the rarity of the STS of the foot. The objective of the present study was to review the long term follow up results of primary STS of the foot who underwent preoperative or postoperative radiotherapy.

Methods: We performed a retrospective review of 11 patients with primary STS of the foot treated between 1980 and 2008, at a musculoskeletal tumor referral center. The tumor locations included dorsum of the foot in 8 cases and plantar aspect of the foot in 3 patients. The median tumor size was 5.5 cm (range 2 to 8 cm). Two patients had been referred us after local recurrence. Five patients had a wide local excision. Surgical margin was positive in 5 patients. The most frequent histopathologic diagnosis was synovial sarcoma in 8 cases. RT was implemented preoperatively to 3 patients and postoperatively to 8 patients. One patient with positive surgical margin treated with brachytherapy in addition to preoperative external beam radiotherapy. Six cases with high grade and large tumor received chemotherapy.

Results: The median follow-up period was 73 (11 to 224) months. The overall 5-year survival rate of all patients was 78.8%. Three of 11 patients developed a local recurrence at median of 12 (range, 6 to 13) months, resulting in a 5-year local control rate of 71%. The histopathology of the all (3) patients who relapsed was synovial sarcoma. The surgical margins were positive in only one patient. One of the 3 patients with local recurrence was salvaged by further limb sparing surgery. Two patients required amputation. Also, these 3 cases developed lung metastasis and 2 of them died due to metastatic disease. Eight (72.7%) patients without local recurrence remained disease-free at an average follow up of 73 months.

Conclusion: It is difficult to make wide excisions due to the anatomic structure of the foot. Radiotherapy may improve the local control rates in this stiuation and enables the limb preservation. Therefore, multidisiplinary approach is important as in other regional STS to get good oncologic and functional treatment outcomes in STS of the foot.